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FOR SEVENTEEN YEARS, THE LESBIAN AND GAY WEEKLY

‘Milestone’ AIDS gathering in N.Y.

An unprecedented conference in New York brings together an unusual combination of people involved in the AIDS crisis, including activists, PWAs and bureaucrats

By Steve Rose

NEW YORK — In what some described as a milestone in the history of the AIDS research crisis, 140 AIDS activists — PWAs, researchers, advocates, and high-ranking government bureaucrats — spent a productive three days here at a conference called “Organizing Community-Based Clinical Trials: Models for the AIDS Epidemic.”

The conference, held July 7-9, brought together officials from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and leading AIDS activists in an atmosphere of cooperation and calm that seemed impossible just last month, when AIDS activists stormed the stage of the International AIDS Conference in Montreal.

Reflecting the new-found cooperation, the event was co-chaired by New York PWA activist Michael Callen and Donald Abrams, director of the County Community Consortium (CCC) of San Francisco, and was organized with the input and support of the American Foundation for AIDS Research (AmFAR) and the National Institutes of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID), which subsidized some of the conference-goers’ expenses.

As the mainstream press noted in apparent baffled amazement, the event marked the first time in the history of the AIDS crisis that members of ACT UP worked with NIH officials.

The conference undertook an ambitious agenda, designed primarily to educate new community-based research organizations in the basics of conducting AIDS treatment trials. NIAID is seeking to win over suspicious AIDS activists and to harness the outreach abilities and expertise of community-based health care. “We see community-based research as an integral part of the process,” said Lawrence Deyton, NIAID’s newly appointed special liaison for community-based AIDS research.

During presentations by community physicians and PWAs, NIAID and FDA officials visibly winced as speakers decried “unethical” and “inhumane” research procedures at NIAID-supported hospitals, including Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston.

Other agenda items included designing research protocols, statistics and data management, legal issues, fundraising, appropriate patient management, the use of placebos in controlled experiments, and clinical endpoints. Special panels addressed demographic and ethical concerns, researcher/clinician and AIDS advocacy perspectives.

Presenters ranged from Callen and his physician, Joseph Sonnabend, to AmFAR’s Mathilde Krim, to *AIDS Treatment News* editor John James. James, who supports the CRI model, nonetheless offered sober ad-

vice: “How do we prevent community-based research from being a pale shadow of the NIH? CRI is a catchall for things the government researchers don’t want to do because they want to do ‘elegant science.’ ”

James and Sonnabend were among many presenters who addressed the sticky ethical and scientific issue of clinical endpoints in research, that is, the points at which a treatment is deemed to have efficacy in the treatment group. “Body counts — deaths and opportunistic infections — are a false elegance,” he said, “a procedural elegance for which we are expected to wait.”

Perhaps the most controversial guest speaker was Iris Davis, a Black woman who serves a large community of women in Brooklyn at the Bushwick Clinic. Reporting that two thousand women depend on two physicians, Davis described the situation as “unethical.” Lambasting the health care system, Davis raised the overlapping issues of class, race and culture in urban centers affected by HIV disease.

“You travel two hours on a train with a fever of 103, and when you get to see me, the lab has lost the bottles with your blood in it so I can’t help you.... Do you have a day care center within your ACTGs [AIDS Clinical Trials Groups]? If you don’t, I can’t send my women of color, she stated. At one point, a man in the audience interjected, “Don’t say that!” “Why not?” Davis belloyed back. “It’s real.... We have a very uphill struggle to go.”

The issue of equitable access to community-based drug trials came up frequently, particularly during the panel featuring PWAs and advocates for under-represented groups. “The researchers told me I was lucky I didn’t get the placebo when they unblinded my trial,” said New England CRI’s LeBaron Moseby, a Black gay man and an AIDS research subject. “But I told them they were lucky.”

Conferees must streamline their thinking about outreach by concentrating on “getting the drugs to people,” Moseby said. Similarly, he chided researchers about the absurdity and cruelty of placebo controls. “You have got to stop playing at doing science,” he said, turning toward FDA officials. “Just get the drugs to us and we’ll know what to do with them.”

Two women with AIDS, prisoners at Bedford Hills Correctional Facility, stressed the desperate need for treatments in prisons and the desire of inmates to participate. “Bring the trial drugs to the people, but don’t treat us like guinea pigs,” pleaded Caren Royster.

Conflicting approaches to access between the CCC model of San Francisco and its new rival group, the San Francisco Research Alliance, and the New York CRI were high-

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JULY BOOK REVIEW



Featuring: *The Dog Collar Murders* by Barbara Wilson, *OUT/LOOK* national lesbian/gay quarterly, *Wendel* and *Morgan Calabrese* cartoons, *Permanent Partners* by Betty Berzon, photographs of southern Italian youth...

Community hospital’s funds slashed

Ongoing severe budget cuts and city politics threaten the viability of Boston hospital that serves those who cannot afford health care

By Jennie McKnight

BOSTON — In the midst of massive budget cuts last week that have sent shock waves through the state, a budget crisis at the local level is brewing as funding for Boston City Hospital (BCH) continues to be slashed. While Boston Mayor Ray Flynn publicly slams Gov. Michael Dukakis for brutal cuts in social services and other areas, BCH staff and community activists charge Flynn with the same callousness toward the employees and users of the primary hospital in the city for people who cannot afford health care — 70 percent of whom are people of color. The cuts come at a time when BCH has the fastest rising increase in numbers of patients with AIDS and when private health care is increasingly out of reach for many.

“As [Flynn] himself says, ‘You can’t balance the budget on the backs of the most vulnerable.’ We just want to hold him to his word,” said Arvid Muller, a member of the BCH Labor/Community Coalition. The coalition organized a rally of about 200 BCH staff and community members outside Boston City Hall July 19 to protest the most recent BCH budget cut — an \$8.5 million difference between the mayor’s final budget allotment for the Department of Health and Hospitals (DHH) for the coming fiscal year and his own DHH commissioner’s request to maintain current services.

Many of the speakers at the rally said the cuts would result in a dramatic reduction of services which would ultimately cost lives. Since BCH is the only hospital mandated to provide services regardless of the patient’s ability to pay, people unable to get care at BCH will have nowhere to go, they argued. In addition, many of the services provided at BCH are unavailable elsewhere, like interpreter services for patients who do not speak English, and support services — like counseling and referral — for people whose

health care needs are not strictly medical.

The coalition, which comprises the unions that represent BCH employees and community activists, is demanding that the \$8.5 million Flynn cut be restored immediately in the supplemental budget process. This proposal, which several city councillors have said they support, would require the mayor to ask the Boston City Council for funding for BCH before seeking money for any other expense not covered by the budget. Supporters of the coalition at the rally represented a wide range of community groups, including the Boston Rainbow Coalition, Women Inc., Boston NOW, ACT UP, the Chinese Progressive Association, Health Care For All, the Reproductive Rights Coalition (R2N2), the NAACP, City Life, the Labor Page, and the Washington Manor Tenants Association.

“We need to make sure [Flynn aide] Ray Dooley keeps his promise [to seek BCH funding first in the supplemental budget process],” openly gay City Councilor David Scondras told the ralliers. But questions about still deeper cuts in the current BCH budget were raised as rumors spread of Flynn’s plan to pass \$5 million of Boston’s local aid revenue losses (from the Dukakis budget ax) on to the DHH.

The timing of the current BCH cuts comes on the heels of a \$4 million cut imposed on spending between April and June of this year, which in part led to the elimination of over 200 jobs, most through layoffs that happened last month. In addition, contract negotiations are underway with several bargaining units representing hospital staff. These factors, in addition to the increased need for BCH services and city plans to further cut back, have resulted in a growing sense of anger and urgency at BCH.

“When Ray Flynn cut \$8 million from the

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Quote of the week

"In Florida, retirees are working at McDonald's because there's not enough kids to do it."

— *Anti-abortionist Robert Marshall explaining why his organization, the American Life League, opposes abortion and birth control, in the Boston Globe. Marshal said one reason the U.S. should be concerned about birth control and abortion is because they have created a decline in U.S. population and cited the fast food situation in Florida as a prime example.*

For a nickel I will

NEW YORK — Actress Sigourney Weaver, who played the tough-as-nails dyke's-wet-dream space explorer in *Aliens* and who was recently nominated for two Academy Awards, told *People* magazine that she now charges autograph seekers a dollar a pop for her Jane Hancock. Weaver donates all the money she collects to AIDS research.

"So far, I've gotten several hundred dollars, nobody refuses. Some say, 'Here's \$20' ... It changes the whole experience of giving out autographs. It stops being about being a celebrity and becomes two people sharing," she said. Weaver said she got the idea from actress Celeste Holm who, at 50 cents an autograph, has collected \$20,000 for UNICEF over the past two decades.

□ Christopher Wittke

No closet for Cris



Liane Enkels

SAN FRANCISCO — Women's music icon Cris Williamson recently "avoided" coming out in an interview in the *Washington Blade*. The *Blade* reported that when asked about her own coming out process, Williamson said, "I'm not. People make that assumption."

Williamson (along with Holly Near and Meg Christian, with whom Williamson worked for years) helped define and shape "women's music" in the early 1970s. "Women were looking for self-contained strong women and I was one," Williamson told the *Blade*. She said that she "sings to people," and that her music "is not gender-oriented." And although Williamson recognizes that most of her fans are women, she said, "in my mind the audience is the world."

Not surprisingly, Williamson's interview seems to have touched a few nerves. A recent issue of the *Blade* printed a letter that Williamson sent to "clarify and explain some things." She "clarifies" her response to the coming out question by writing, "What I meant...was that I have never felt like I was in a closet, so there has been no 'coming out of the closet' for me."

In the only reference to lesbians in her letter, Williamson wrote, "...I want women to know that I will continue to work and support Lesbian and Gay rights in this world, as well as the rights of all people who need to be free."

□ Kelly Gaines

Feminists say abortion pill will be available soon

WASHINGTON — Leaders of major U.S. mainstream feminist organizations say they believe that RU486 (also known as the abortion pill) will soon be available in the U.S. Representatives from the National Organization for Women (NOW) and the Fund for the Feminist Majority (FFM)

recently returned from a fact-finding mission in Europe and are speaking out about the controversial pill which is currently available only in France.

NOW and FFM both say that RU486 will be in this country, either legally or illegally, within two to five years. Many believe that the promising drug, which has had a 95 percent effective rate in terminating pregnancies, is a major breakthrough in abortion technology and could change the terms of the abortion debate in this country. No U.S. drug companies, however, have applied to market RU486 in the United States, partly due to pressure from anti-abortion groups such as "Operation Rescue."

"RU486 can save so many lives that we are determined to build a network both nationally and internationally to ensure that its research and development proceeds as fast as possible. I can't believe that the medical community of this country and the health establishment as a whole would allow a small group of people to keep a drug of such promise out of the United States, and I know the feminist community will not allow it," said Molly Yard, president of the National Organization for Women, in *Sojourner*.

RU486 is an antiprogesterin that is taken orally and is currently given only under medical supervision. The patient takes three pills and goes back to the clinic two days later for a shot of a synthetic prostaglandin. Taken this way, RU486 has proved to be effective 95 percent of the time. The pill can be taken up to as long as between five and seven weeks of gestation.

RU486 could potentially replace 50 percent of abortions worldwide, but the drug looks promising in other ways as well. It is currently being used to treat or possibly prevent breast cancer, glaucoma, meningioma, and endometriosis.

□ Kelly Gaines

AZT to be given to pregnant women

WASHINGTON — For the first time, the effects of AZT in pregnant women will be studied in a clinical trial. The National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) announced July 10 that the study will be the first step in determining whether giving AZT to pregnant women who are HIV positive can prevent the transmission of HIV from women to their babies. HIV is a virus widely thought to be a cause of AIDS.

NIAID reports that more than 1,600 cases of AIDS in children since 1981. More than 80 percent of these cases are the result of the transmission of HIV from pregnant women to their babies. Little is known about how the transmission occurs, but NIAID says the likelihood of the transmission of HIV from an HIV positive woman to her baby is between 25 and 40 percent.

□ Kelly Gaines

But everybody's doing it

MORA, Minn. — The oddly-named Concerned Parents for Abstinence succeeded in forcing the local school board to remove AIDS and sex education from the curriculum back in May, according to a story in *Equal Time*. On July 23, ACT UP plans to fight back with a demonstration at the street intersection where the town's Assembly of God, Lutheran and Catholic churches are located. Activists from the Twin Cities, Duluth, and St. Cloud are expected to rendezvous for the demonstration.

The Illusion Theater's performance of a play *Amazing Grace* touched off the controversy. David Squire, an Assembly of God pastor, addressed the audience before a performance at the Mora High School Auditorium: "Parts of the play seem to endorse homosexuality as an acceptable alternative life style. We believe it is an aberrant life style and a perversion of natural desire. Obviously, homosexuals are unable to reproduce themselves and usually depend on recruitment to increase their numbers." Concerned Parents for Abstinence advocates developing a "positive, moral" approach that promotes abstinence until marriage.

□ Marc Stein

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Support groups now forming at Project Aware for individuals with AIDS and AIDS Related Complex (ARC), and those who have tested HIV positive.

Project Aware is an AIDS counseling and educational program of Stanley Street Treatment and Resources. For more information, call 679-5222. Confidentiality assured.

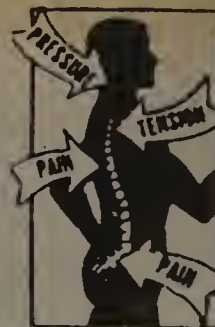


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Peptide-T praised at forum

The co-developers of the promising drug speak at the first in a series of public discussions sponsored by CRINE

By Mike Friedman

BOSTON — About 50 people turned out July 12 to hear from the co-developers of Peptide-T, a promising new drug, at the first public forum sponsored by the Community Research Initiative of New England (CRINE). CRINE is planning to hold a series of lectures and discussions about new AIDS treatments as part of its “ongoing commitment to the widest possible dissemination of AIDS information,” said Steven Busby, a CRINE board member.

Candace Pert, a neuropharmacologist at the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH), and Micheal Ruff, a researcher in the Cellular Immunology Section at the National Institute of Dental Research, first began work on Peptide-T in 1987.

Studies of Peptide-T were first conducted in Sweden in 1986. The drug was given to four PWAs who experienced weight gain, clearing up of AIDS-related skin conditions, and improvements in thrush and PCP. Although the Swedish findings were reported in the British medical journal *Lancet* in 1987, the trial was cut short by the arrival of AZT in Sweden.

In March, 1987, Pert, Ruff and Dr. Frederick Goodwin, the director of NIMH, appeared before a National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) AIDS Clinical Treatment Unit Committee to push for federally sponsored Peptide-T trials. According to Wynne Beebe of the Integra Institute, a non-profit research organization which is helping to put together the trials of Peptide-T, several of the doctors were hostile to Peptide-T because of their own competing drug, CD4. One of these researchers, Martin Hirsch of Harvard University reportedly cut off Pert in the middle of her presentation and began to yell at her and her colleagues. He alleged that no one had been able to replicate Pert and Ruff’s experiments with Peptide-T. When asked to disclose which labs had conducted further Peptide-T experiments, Hirsch, apparently violating the principle of open scientific research, told Pert that the committee would discuss it when she was out of the room. Hirsch then physically pushed Pert, Ruff and Goodwin out of the room.

Despite such opposition to Peptide-T, trials began at the University of Southern

California (USC) in late 1987 and have continued for the past 18 months. During the question and answer period at the CRINE forum, Ruff said all 22 of the patients at USC had reported improvements in their condition, and that none had come down with any opportunistic infections while taking Peptide-T. She added that there are no side effects associated with Peptide-T.

Excitement over Peptide-T

Fred Mandel, Executive Director of CRINE, called Peptide-T a “new and exciting part of the medical scene.” In her discussion of Peptide-T, Pert said that there has been a “revolution” in the understanding of the body that has been brought about by AIDS. “AIDS is teaching us that disease *always* includes the mind and the body...AIDS is teaching us how the ‘mind-body’ works.” During the late 1970s and early 1980s, Pert said, new research determined the existence of “receptors” for various substances located in the brain. These receptors, for such things as opium, allow the cells to be affected by a substance entering the body.

Pert said HIV, a virus thought by many to be a cause of AIDS, attaches itself to a naturally occurring receptor called CD4. These receptors, which contain a substance called VIP, are located on several different kinds of cells found in the thymus gland, intestine, immune system, and in the front of the brain. Pert explained that these receptors regulate the ability of the various body parts to work together. After HIV attaches itself to the receptor, it begins to release a toxic protein called GPI20. Peptide-T, which is given intra-nasally, can dislodge HIV from the CD4 receptor, thus preventing infection of additional cells. By mimicking the actions of VIP, Pert hopes it will stimulate the cell and downgrade the action of the HIV virus. In addition, Peptide-T can help relieve the toxic effects of GPI20, which has been shown to be one of the most powerful neurotoxins in existence.

The Integra Institute is providing the seed money, estimated at \$500,000 for the CRINE/Fenway trial of Peptide-T in Bos-

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Mass. Rep. tries to add anti-gay/les foster policy to budget

By Liz Galst

BOSTON — In an attempt to turn gubernatorial policy into law, State Representative Marie Parente (D-Milford) managed to attach onto the supplemental budget bill an amendment that would prohibit the state from placing foster children in lesbian and gay households. The amendment was later killed in the House/Senate conference committee.

According to Arline Isaacson, co-chair of the Massachusetts Gay and Lesbian Political Caucus, Parente’s amendment was added to the supplemental budget bill in such a way as to make the bill law indefinitely. Most amendments to the bill are valid only for fiscal year 1989. “We tried to have the House leadership go through the amendments out of order, voting on the ones that everyone was going to approve first, and then leaving the controversial amendments for last. Parente caught them at it, and she ran up to the podium and started screaming and yelling. We tried to call a ‘PQ,’ to have them call the question immediately, but you need a two-thirds majority for that, about 100 and something votes and we only had about 95. While we were out strategizing, we got news that Parente got the amendment passed on a voice vote.

“Parente didn’t think fast enough to get her amendment added on to the Senate bill, so when the bill came to the conference committee, [Rep. Richard] Voke (chair of the House Ways and Means Committee) and [Sen. Patricia] McGovern just decided to

eliminate it.”

Gay and Lesbian Defense Committee member Mara Math described the Parente amendment as “an attempt to legitimize her own homophobic agenda. I don’t think it’s a coincidence that she’s pushing this at a time when a gay rights bill, albeit a limited gay rights bill, may pass.”

“As long as Dukakis is governor, it doesn’t make a difference if the foster care policy is statute or not,” commented Don Gorton of the Greater Boston Lesbian/Gay Political Alliance (GBL/GPA). Gorton added that the real battle against the homophobic foster care policy must be waged on several fronts. Because the foster care policy was not passed into law, it can simply be overturned by the next governor. “Both [Frank] Bellotti and [Evelyn] Murphy oppose the policy.”

GBL/GPA is challenging the constitutionality of the foster care policy in court, where their suit has remained in the discovery stage, the stage in which lawyers must produce enough evidence to substantiate a case, since 1985.

Math suggested that the Parente amendment is a challenge to supporters of the lesbian and gay civil rights bill. “Parente’s bigotry points up that we can not stop with a gay rights bill that primarily relates to our rights in the marketplace. We need a lesbian/gay rights bill that acknowledges our full humanity.” □



John Zeh

OUT! protests unspent AIDS money

WASHINGTON — Thirteen members of the D.C. direct action group OUT! (Oppression Under Target!) chained themselves to two doors at city hall, and blocked entrance to the city council’s meeting. Three were arrested for disorderly conduct and the others were charged with blocking a public entrance. High-strength Kryptonite cycle locks kept the doors closed long after the protesters were taken into custody.

“City officials say District government is too broke to respond adequately to the AIDS crisis,” said Phil Fornaci, a member of OUT! “We say if D.C. won’t make AIDS a top priority, then there can be no more business as usual. AIDS funding is not expendable.”

All 13 were released on \$50 bail.

□ John Zeh

Hospital funds

Continued from page 1

budget,” said BCH clerk Gretchen Meyers, “he was saying to the people who work and utilize BCH ‘Shrivel up and die.’” Meyers said the cuts would be devastating at a time when the need for BCH services are on the rise. She, like many who spoke at the rally, said the problem lies in the politics of Flynn’s plan to build a modern, more efficient BCH.

Neither the mayor’s office nor the commissioner of DHH returned *GCN*’s calls before press time.

‘Getting his name on a goddamned building’

Despite the statewide panic over the Dukakis budget slashings and the drying up of federal funding during this decade, Flynn’s critics — and even his own aide, Dooley — say the BCH cuts are not a result of immediate economic crisis. All agree that the city’s plans to build a new BCH are the subtext to current budget maneuverings. The plans, and the assumptions that went into them, are the primary sources of contention.

Martha Hams, a spokesperson for the House Officers Association, which represents interns and residents at BCH, explained that unlike many large components of the city budget, like schools, DHH actually contributes to city revenues. For example, in fiscal year 1989 the total DHH budget was \$174 million, but the department brought in \$155 million, through Medicaid, Medicare, and other reimbursement sources. So the actual city contribution to the DHH budget was only \$19 million — less than three percent of the total city budget. And although the city spent money for DHH — which covers not only BCH but also Mattapan and Long Island Chronic disease hospitals, the city’s community health services and ambulance service — during the early 1980s DHH actually generated a surplus, which allowed Flynn to balance city budgets.

Meanwhile the city has spent almost no money to upgrade BCH facilities. According to Hams, while almost every other hospital in the area has rebuilt within the last ten years, BCH “has been starved from a capital standpoint for the last 50 years.”

In 1985 planners hired by the city put forth a proposal to build a modern BCH. Since that proposal was made, the cost of the new facility has been scaled back from \$102 million to \$77 million. City planners have said their goal is to have DHH revenues themselves pay for the new facility, which BCH staff and others say is outrageous and unfair, since the facilities have been neglected for so long. In addition, critics of the proposal say the planners and budget cutters made unrealistic assumptions about

the needs and economics involved.

One of the first criticisms leveled at the new facility plan is that it has no provision for the rise in the numbers of people with AIDS (PWAs) who need to use BCH facilities. Given the changing demographics of the epidemic in Boston — in which an increasing number people of color, poor people and IV drug users, and their sex partners and children are being diagnosed — the number of PWAs using BCH is increasing 75 percent a year. In 1986, the year after the plan was approved, four to five PWAs were hospitalized at BCH on any given day. Now there are 25. By 1993, when the new facility should be completed, that number is estimated to be between 80 and 120. Yet the new hospital will actually have 56 fewer beds than the current facility.

Hams added that the planners made assumptions about needs based on data that does not apply to BCH. While other hospitals in the state do, in fact, have significant numbers of empty beds, she said BCH often runs at over 90 percent capacity and sometimes over 100. Again, given the projections about the AIDS epidemic, the rising numbers of people who can’t afford care, increased homelessness, drug-related health care costs and the persistence of other social forces that utilize BCH resources — like rape, abuse, malnutrition and poverty, planning for a smaller hospital with fewer staff will result in a health care access crisis, according to Hams.

In addition to irresponsible need and budget projections, the planners are undermining the revenue potential of the new facility, according to Hams. Since reimbursements for care are the source of BCH income, cutting services will inevitably result in lost federal and state money for the city, she reasons.

Meyers, who said staff and community response to the cuts would escalate if the funding and services were not restored, offered this analysis: “Flynn wanted to get his name on a goddamned building. At the rate it’s going, that state of the art facility is not going to have any patients or any workers because there won’t be anything left.” □

Win, Lose or Draw

Join **GCN** on **Thursday, July 27, at 8 p.m.** for an evening of sit-at-the-edge-of-your-seat gameshow fun at Club Cabaret (209 Columbus Ave., Boston). Contestants will be playing 'Win, Lose or Draw,' the television version of Pictionary. All proceeds of the \$5 admission will benefit GCN. See next week's paper for other events during the Summer Games series, sponsored by Club Cabaret to benefit organizations in the lesbian and gay community. Thanks, Club Cabaret!

Hello/Goodbye

Didn't we just say goodbye to a whole bunch of collective members and hello to a whole bunch of new ones? Has GCN never heard of separation anxiety?

Fare-thee-wells are in order to our outgoing Coordinating Editor, Marc Stein, who taught us that working at GCN is a twenty-four-hour-a-day-job. "Just because you have to sleep at night," he seems to have said, "doesn't mean you can't fund-raise while you're doing so." Oh, how we'll miss his laughter, the honking as he blows his nose, and the reams and reams of memos composed just for us. Mr. Stein is off to gradual school, where he will be working on some sort of high-falutin' advanced history degree. No one will forget the history he made here when he established GCN's first-ever Promotions Fund, to get this old dog of a rag into more hands in more places. Keep in touch, Marc!

So, who could possibly take Marc's place? Why, none other than ongoing Prisoner Project volunteer Natalie Diffloth, of course. Natalie, who is extremely nice and appears soft-spoken actually studies Karate and isn't afraid to use her skills. We're looking forward to a combination staff meeting/cement block breaking demonstration in the near future and wish Natalie the very best of luck as she tries to untangle the complicated jumble of job responsibilities that come with the Coordinating Editor position.

Fred Gorman, a former Board member, recently took over the Art Director position on a temporary basis. Fred's beautiful layout and artwork will grace our pages for the entire summer, that is, if we can keep him from skulking around those South End art studios soaking up the atmosphere and stealing wildly artistic ideas.

Sad to say, but we're telling you, we must say "so long" to Liz Galst, who was Art Director for a year. Missing her is something that we will be doing, all of us, readers and collective members alike. Besides writing in her inimitable Galstian style, Liz broke new ground with her extensive outreach to graphic artists and found many an opportunity to use Village Voice Trendy Style headlines on feature articles. This is truly a skill that will come in handy for the rest of her life! We wish you the very best of luck, Liz.

"Community Voices" and "Speaking Out" are parts of our efforts to provide a true forum of opinion for the community. We encourage you to send your ideas, feelings and comments to us, and to respond to ideas expressed in this space. We welcome all contributions except personal attacks. Copies of letters and "Speaking Out" contributions sent elsewhere are printed on a space-available basis. GCN reserves the right to edit letters and "Speaking Out" contributions for length and clarity, in consultation with the author. The opinions expressed are those of the author and are not intended to represent the views of the GCN membership.

Letter and "Speaking Out" contributions must be TYPED and DOUBLE-SPACED. Letters can be NO LONGER THAN TWO PAGES. "Speaking Out" contributions can be NO LONGER THAN FOUR PAGES. Send to: Community Voices or Speaking Out, GCN, 62 Berkeley Street, Boston, MA 02116.

Author Neil Miller's 'non-judgmental approach'

Dear GCN:

I was dismayed to read Donald Stone's review of my friend Neil Miller's book, *In Search of Gay America* [see GCN, July 16-22]. In his eagerness to discredit the book and its author, Stone distorts not only the main thesis of Neil's book, but also the lives of several of the people he interviewed. *In Search of Gay America* is an account that explores the enormous diversity within our community and extolls not any one particular lifestyle, but rather the availability of an increasing number of options for gay

people across the country, in places as different as San Francisco and Bunceton, Missouri (pop. 418). One of the book's great virtues is that Neil reports on the lives of his subjects without judging them.

It is this very point that seems to irritate Stone most. He seems to want the author to condemn small-town gays for staying close to their roots at the expense of becoming a part of an urban gay world. And he chides Neil for daring to suggest that a black gay man has "come home" by worshipping in a black gay evangelical church, without saying that this man joined the church after several years as a "Moonie." Stone unfairly implies that the openly gay mayor of a small Missouri town is politically retrograde for choosing not to hold his lover's hand in public, neglecting to mention that the mayor made a very public appearance on *Nightline* to discuss his homosexuality.

Apparently, Neil's non-judgmental approach to his subjects is acceptable only when it suits Stone's political agenda. Thus Neil is praised for the "brilliance" of his portrait of Susie Bright, editor of *On Our Backs* — Stone, we assume, is comfortable with Bright's view of lesbian sexuality — but is scolded for not taking to task a lesbian college professor who chooses to stay in Fargo, North Dakota and emphasizes the importance of non-gay civic activities in her life.

The reviewer also takes a completely unfair swipe at Neil's view of gay parenting. The chapter in *In Search of Gay America* recounting the story of two lesbians in Newton, Mass. having a child through artificial insemination and the chapter describing the Boston foster care case are both extraordinarily positive. Yet because Neil uses the word "unusual" to describe the wide range of complicated parenting arrangements pioneered by lesbians and gay men, his ground-breaking reportage on the subject is dismissed as if it were written by Phyllis Schlafly.

Stone's final comment, that the "time of change," as described in the book, represents a "turn for the worse" leads me to conclude that the reviewer does not believe in free choice for gay people. According to the stance Stone seems to take, we shouldn't have the right to choose from among the same options (some admittedly dull, some potentially less fulfilling than others, some certainly more "traditional" than others) as everyone else in this society. We should restrict ourselves to living in urban gay ghettos and become his version of good, politically correct homos. Fortunately, in *In Search of Gay America*, Neil Miller takes a more pluralistic view of things.

Yours truly,
Steven McCauley
Somerville, Mass.

'Gay America' lets subjects speak for themselves

Dear GCN:

In reviewing Neil Miller's *In Search of Gay America* [GCN, July 9-15], Donald Stone seems angered by Miller's non-judgmental portrayal of gay people who have "made peace with their origins" often at the expense of "de-emphasizing" their sexual preference. Does Stone think that every gay person should head for a coastal gay city and live in a generally white and middle-class gay ghetto in order to be liberated? To my mind, the appeal of Miller's book is that it opens windows into the ways gay people are coping with all aspects of American life. Stone cynically suspects that Miller wrote the book to target "a conservative straight readership," which is patent nonsense. It is a book for everyone. In its even-handed open-minded objectivity, it brings the lives of numerous interesting individuals to the fore and sets aside any subjective political agenda. Miller does the most liberating thing a portraittist can do: he lets his subjects speak for themselves.

Jonathan Strong
Somerville, Mass.

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Opinions reflected in "editorials" represent the views of the paid staff collective. Signed letters and columns represent the views and opinions of the authors only. We encourage all readers to send us comments, criticism, and information, and to volunteer and become members.

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Before you start moaning

Dear *GCN*:

I entered the Arkansas Dept. of Corr. in July of 1981, a 15 year old street wise kid, cast into a man's world to serve a three year sentence for burglary. I'm still incarcerated for a charge I caught while in prison and am now 23 years old—and I do mean old!

In Arkansas there is only one thing worse than being Black ('nigger' is their word) and that's being gay ('fag'). I'm writing this to let you on the outside know that brothers and sisters are still being repressed in hell-holes such as this because of race and sexual preference.

They incarcerate people here for an extraordinary amount of years without even attempting to let them learn a trade or get an education, increasing the chance that the prisoner will spend the rest of his life at the taxpayer's expense, one way or another. Yet, if they would take the time to educate a guy, which in turn builds his self-worth, there is a good chance that he would enter society and become a productive person.

Take me for example. What should I do when I'm released from prison? I have no job skill. The last time I was free I was 15. True I have my GED, but what kind of job will that get me? But does anybody care? Probably not.

So before you start moaning about crime, crack and the demoralization of our great nation, be sure you've done your part. Find out why they're building all these new prisons all over the country. Find out why they aren't making real efforts to rehabilitate prisoners. You have a right, and a responsibility, to know. Until you speak up, it will continue.

You don't have to die to go to hell. Just come to the Ark. Dept. of 'Corrections' John Walters, 81208 MSU Star Rt Box 22-B, Tucker, AR 72168

Not necessarily a naturally occurring epidemic

Dear *GCN*:

I think it's the right of every gay man to have access to as complete a range of information as possible on the subject of AIDS. In the absence of readily available information on the possibility that AIDS is not a naturally occurring epidemic, the widespread opinion that it is should be open to question. There is, in fact, a mounting body of evidence that AIDS was bio-engineered at Fort Detrick, Maryland — this country's (and the world's) most advanced research center for biological warfare. For those who wish to have more information on the matter the following resources would be helpful:

1. *AIDS: Epidemic or Weapon of War?* is a very thorough and well-researched tape series available from: Archives on Audio, P.O. Box 170023, San Francisco, CA 94117; (415) 346-1840. Ask for Radio Free America Tape Series 16.
2. *Covert Action Information Bulletin* is a quarterly periodical that reports on covert government action in the U.S. and is available at many progressive bookstores. Ask for issues 28 and 29.
3. *A Higher Form of Killing*, by Robert Harris and Jeremy Paxman. Hill and Wang, 1982. A complete history of the chemical and biological warfare programs in the Western world since WWI.
4. *Gene Wars*, by Piller and Yamamoto. William Morrow and Company, 1988. The title says it all.

San Francisco, Calif.
Name withheld by request

Faeries, not fairies

Dear *GCN*:

I would just like to thank you for the well-written article about gay pride in New York, "Big Pride in Big Apple" [July 2-8] but I take offense that you misspelled "faeries." This is the way that Rad Faeries and others of the fey kingdom call themselves. "Fairies" is a very phobic spelling which I think *GCN* should be aware of. Thank you very much.

Boobla
Phil Gauthier
Northampton, Mass.

Contesting the sexual abuse discourse

By Bill Andriette

Much that is bigoted and reactionary in the popular discourse over sexual abuse appears uncontested in *GCN*'s interview with psychotherapist Michael Lew about his book *Victims No Longer* (May 28-June 3).

Lew argues that sexual abuse of boys is a problem much larger and more psychologically devastating and includes a much wider range of phenomena than anyone has recognized.

For all the supposed novelty of Lew's contribution to the sex abuse literature, he simply repeats some of its most tired themes.

There is the usual disregard for the actual experience of young people who relate sexually with an adult. With breathtaking hubris, Lew declares that even when a boy thinks he is enjoying sex with someone older, he is actually suffering abuse. Lew's book has a special chapter for these tragically delusional victims.

There is the usual rhetorical escalation that puts the same inflammatory label on phenomena so divergent that the key terms become meaningless. "Sexual abuse" for Lew encompasses both the coerced fucking of a five-year-old and an act of "sexual suggestion" between an adult and a boy 16. "Incest" is asserted to include sex between persons as distantly related as "neighbors."

There is the usual flippant use of statistics. Lew declares that one-third of all boys are sexually abused, a number that seems almost modest when one counts the number who have experienced "sexual suggestion" and exposure to pornography before their 18th birthday.

There is the usual lengthy litany of psychic ills — workaholism, anxiety, inability to get close, etc. — that can be explained by sexual abuse, perhaps abuse recalled only after the client invests authority and hundreds of dollars in an appropriately trained therapist.

The *GCN* interlocutor never questions Lew's phobic vision of sex, fails to raise what should be obvious counterexamples, fails to note his condescension toward the young, and never wonders whether someone who works solely with self-declared abuse victims can really generalize about intergenerational sexuality. Lew's claims, furthermore, are never assessed in light of the assault on sexual freedom and youth autonomy waged under the banner of "child protection."

I do not question the efforts of people who feel they were sexually abused to make sense of their experience and heal their hurts. Coerced sex, like any other coercion, can leave lasting scars. But one must wonder why child sexual abuse, and subsidiary themes of "missing children" and "child pornography" have found such resonance in the 1980s. Why have they become the object of incessant and sensationalist media attention, epitomized by NBC's recent docudrama *I Know My Name is Steven*, which was condemned by the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation? Why have some people so readily wrapped their self-identity around being victims of sex? Why has it been possible for self-declared victims of sexual abuse to arrogate to themselves the term "survivors," implicitly elevating the harm they have suffered above all others? Why do therapists construct interpretations of people's lives by reference to a single sexual incident — perhaps a mere "sexual suggestion" — who would never think to do so with reference to a beating, or, for that matter sexism, racism, or classism? Why is it possible to assert out of the blue causal connection between almost any psychic ill and sex with an older person in childhood or adolescence? In short, what is it in our historical and cultural moment that gives sex such explanatory power?

These are questions that never strike Lew, for whom the shibboleth that intergenerational sex equals rape follows simplistically from the generalization that children and adolescents have less power than adults. The generalization is valid, but the conclusion is flawed, entailing as it does that sex between Blacks and whites or women and men is inevitably "rape."

Lew absolves himself of the intellectual burden, placed on him by feminist and gay scholarship, to analyze exactly how the relations between persons who belong to categories largely socially constructed (such as

those of gender, race, sexual orientation and age) get worked out in particular cultural contexts and between particular individuals. Instead, like the classic 19th century bigots, who in contemplating the "nature" of "the Woman" or "the Negro" simply elaborated prevailing cultural stereotypes, Lew substitutes an appeal to the supposed sexlessness of the young for concrete analysis of the varieties of sexual expression possible between youths and adults.

With the historical and anthropological ignorance that is always the solace of bigots, he dismisses intergenerational sex as abuse, whether we are talking about ancient Greece, an Amerindian berdache, a New Guinea puberty rite, or regardless of what participants report about their experience.

Lew simply pulls professional rank on those who dare to disagree. Some people who had sex with adults as children or adolescents may initially claim it was harmless fun. But after sufficient "therapy" at his basic rate of \$75 an hour, Lew told me that all such persons in his experience have recognized that they were molested.

My own experiences as a boy with men have never been authorized by a therapist, but they bear mention anyway. For as far as I can remember into my childhood, sex was a realm of play and delight. Mostly there were the solitary joys of masturbation, but I also sought out sex with other kids and adults. I remember the big, pink hard-on I had as a five year old on the examination table as Dr. Peters did her routine genital probings, a (unilateral?) erotic experience whose recollection fueled jerk-off fantasies all through pubescence. I also remember how disappointed I was at age nine when the inspection for ticks before lights-out on a class camping trip required taking off all but our underpants in front of our cute teacher. My sexual luck turned when I was 14, and I started a relationship with a 22-year-old I met through Gay and Lesbian Youth of New York. There followed a number of sexual encounters with men, including a brief tryst with my uncle, who takes vicarious pleasure in my open gayness. Some of the sex was ecstatic, some ordinary, and all of it quite consensual. More than that, it was empowering. Having as an adolescent a network of adult friends diminished dependence on family and school (the primary loci of child abuse). Though sex was not always the basis of our relationships, neither were they distorted by precluding sex.

Lew never grants that experiences like mine are possible. He draws all of his evidence from a clinical sample of persons who have sought him out because they are troubled by their early sexual encounters. Similarly, pre-Stonewall psychiatry based its diseased picture of homosexuality on the troubled and institutionalized gays who were the only ones accessible for study. This methodological failure should fall within Lew's political memory as a gay person, but instead he (and virtually all his colleagues) reproduce the error with intergenerational sex.

It is outrageous that *GCN* fails to confront Lew's seamless and sweeping claims with counter-examples like mine. One need only look so far into the chronicles of gay experience as Edmund White or Boyd McDonald to find similar stories. Surely, in a different context *GCN* would not make the same mistake. A white person who said, citing personal experience corroborated by friends, that all Blacks were vicious muggers would surely not go unchallenged in *GCN*. Yet what Lew does, along with other writers on sex abuse, is analagous.

So arrogant have some of these abuse activists become with their much-vaunted victimhood and the many letters they dangle after their names, so drunk with the hubris that comes from being evidently above critique, that they have demanded boundless power to censor, punish and define terms to their liking. It is perfectly acceptable in progressive circles to proclaim, as did a recent letter writer in the *Boston Globe*, that *Mur-mur of the Heart* should be banned because the film suggests that a boy can enjoy sex with his mother. It is perfectly acceptable to declare, as did a recent abuse "expert" in the New York tabloid *Newsday*, that sex play between children that goes beyond un-

dressing is molestation. It does not raise progressive hackles in the least that under the Massachusetts porn law, hatched with the full support of Gov. Dukakis, it is a crime punishable by a *minimum* of 10 years in jail and a \$10,000 fine to photograph or even paint a merely naked person under 18 (or buy or sell a depiction so produced).

The right wing has filled the vacuum left by the failure of progressives to confront such dangerous silliness, a failure that *GCN*'s interview with Lew exemplifies. That vacuum has been filled with extraordinarily oppressive legal machinery. Under the Massachusetts porn law, a single photo of a 17-year-old boy with a hard-on appearing (say, inadvertently or through deliberate plant) in a major gay magazine gives the government the right to shut down and seize all the assets of the magazine, the printing and distribution companies, and the gay bookstores that sold it, in addition to jailing for at least 10 years all those involved, however tangentially, in the publication's production, distribution or sale.

It is these laws, not sodomy statutes, that the state will use to liquidate the lesbian and gay community if the U.S. ever makes the transition from authoritarianism to fascism. And yet, because such laws have so far only attacked the margins of our community, most activists have shamefully ignored them.

These dangerous laws and the blustery rhetoric that supports them do not serve the real interests of those rightly confronting sexual coercion. Yet such bigotry and over-reaction has characterized the political and cultural reception of the sex abuse discourse for the past decade. *GCN*'s obliviousness to the resulting danger does not just betray inexcusable disregard for the legion of gay men in jail for five, ten, 15 years or life on account of consensual sex with adolescents. It shows disregard for the freedom of us all.

Bill Andriette is the features editor of The Guide to the Gay Northeast and was a contributor to One Teenager in Ten: Writings by Gay and Lesbian Youth. He lives in Boston.

The opinions expressed in *Speaking Out* are those of the author(s) and are not intended to represent the views of the *GCN* membership.

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JULY book supplement

A tired tale of the porn/anti-porn 'sex wars'

Barbara Wilson's *Dog Collar Murders* mystery doesn't have a clue about class

The Dog Collar Murders

Barbara Wilson

Seal Press, Seattle, 1989

\$8.95, 206pp.

Reviewed by Pam Mitchell

I owe Barbara Wilson. Her first Pam-and-Penny mystery, *Murder in the Collective*, got me going on a mystery jag, a fact I'll be eternally grateful for. I was too much of a novice at mystery-reading to fully appreciate Wilson's craft and spunk then, and far too involved in her vibrant and thought-provoking story of life and death in a progressive workplace and in the Phillipines of Ferdinand Marcos to notice her behind the scenes playing with the old whodunit formula. I just knew I was having a delicious time feeling my own world of queers and lefty politics reflected back to me.

By the time Wilson produced the second book of the series, I had read enough elsewhere to appreciate her finesse. *Sisters of the Road*, a book about teenage run-aways and sexual violence, was more uneven and less delectable than its predecessor, but I admired the way Wilson toyed with some standard distancing techniques of mystery-writing by scuttling them mid-book. She thereby succeeded in jerking her sleuth — and her readers — out of the safety of the genre's usual victim/hero dichotomy and into some grisly and all-too-real violence against women.

Given these precedents, I was thrilled by the appearance of *The Dog Collar Murders*, the third book of the Nilsen series, expecting another enjoyable and provocative romp through the political thicket with some characters I've come to regard as old friends. But alas, the Wilson/Nilsen team has had better days.

Whereas in both the earlier books Wilson establishes political and personal motivation for Nilsen's sleuthing, in *Dog Collars* we are expected to accept that she sticks her nose into some incredibly risky business (and that her friends support her in doing so) simply because it's a hobby she developed. The dippy female who stumbles from one hornet's nest to another until she inadvertently solves the crime is a staple of the mystery genre, but one that hasn't — for obvious reasons — been picked up by many feminists. Neither Pam nor her fellow travelers seem the least bit dippy in the two earlier books, so why is it that Pam's actions in *Dog Collar*

Barbara Wilson

Murders are unaccountably stupid and no one sees fit to comment, even after she puts her infant niece in mortal danger? Wilson seems to be so caught up in the process of debating the fine points of feminist theory that she's forgotten that we could expect this band of politically savvy feminists to care at least as much as most other people about whether we live or die. Without either believable motivation or a proper sense of danger, this reader found it hard to care much, either.

Wilson evidently expects us to be so engrossed in her characters' various discourses on porn and S/M — which are presented in what feels like real time, going on for page after didactic page like a particularly boring conference report — that we won't notice the weak plot and lack of character development. But Wilson isn't nearly as gifted as an essayist as she has previously proven herself to be as a novelist. Furthermore, her choice of subject matter, the feminist porn-and-S/M "sex wars," is a bit of an over-beaten dead horse in my book. (In fact, you would think Wilson might have listened to one of her own *Dog Collar* characters, the author of a book about the sexuality debates aptly entitled *Enough Already!*) Wilson/Nilsen's efforts to demonstrate that each viewpoint has an element of validity and an element of hypocrisy might have been useful several years ago, when polarization around these issues was turning sister against sister. Now it just seems boring.

While its main plot never grabbed me and its rambling, reheated politics put me to sleep, *Dog Collar's* subplots — Pam and her twin sister Penny finally coming to terms with the death of their parents, lesbian Pam's feelings about straight Penny's decision to marry, Pam's push/pull with her lover about whether to move in together — showed a glimmer of the kind of thought-provoking and absorbing writing Wilson is capable of. But while the earlier books gave considerable attention to power dynamics in the workplace and in the world, attention to racism and imperialism in *Dog Collar* is perfunctory at best, and its treatment of class issues is awful. From *Collective*, we know that Pam and Penny very consciously chose to share their privilege by turning the print shop they inherited into a multicultural collective. But now, a few years later, no one in their whole crowd blinks an eye when Pam's lover Hadley decides to invest some of *her* inheritance (what's with all these inheritances, anyway?) in a hip-and-groovy espresso bar (in a neighborhood of Seattle that in real life provided housing for primarily low-income Black people when I lived there a decade ago. It clearly doesn't now — thanks to the Hadleys of the world). She then proceeds to treat her employees like they are "hers" — i.e., with the kind of patronizing attitude that would have any real-life, self-respecting feminist workers scrambling to sign union cards.

Pam and Hadley's inheritances also prove convenient later on when they resolve their intimacy vs. space dilemma by — voila! — buying houses next door to one another! Unless housing is a hell of a lot cheaper in Seattle than it is anywhere else, this is hardly

Continued on page 10

Ah, the eternal lure of the stereotype

Tony Patrioli's photos of southern Italian boys

Sunbeams

Tony Patrioli

Alyson Publications, Boston, 1989

\$15 paper, 48pp.

Reviewed by Marcos Bisticas-Cocoves

If you are looking for artistic photography, this is not the book for you. If you are looking for jerk-off pics of naked Mediterranean boys, this book is not for you either. If you are looking for compelling ethnographic documentation of the lives of southern Italian youth, stay away. If you are looking for boring pictures of pretty boys, if you want the same tired stereotypes of southern Europeans, look no further: Tony Patrioli's *Sunbeams* is the book for you.

Sunbeams is a book of about 50 photos of southern Italian teenagers. It's very similar to Patrioli's 1985 *Mediterraneo*; in fact, some of the same boys are featured. The only difference is that in *Sunbeams*, we get no dick. Neither the photographer nor the publisher can be blamed for this omission, however. Alyson Publications recropped photos from the book in line with the 1988 Child Protection and Obscenity Enforcement Act. The Act required publishers to document the ages of all nude models in photographs to ensure that the models were at least 18 years old at the time the photographs were taken. Patrioli, who lives in the northern city of Milan, had no such documentation of his southern models. The law was found unconstitutional in federal court on May 16, but it was too late to change the book. The book reportedly also had troubles at its Michigan printer, where the female staff objected to working with male nudes.

The book is interesting to me because I used to be a Mediterranean boy. Granted, I'm Greek-American and not Sicilian or Calabrian, but for many photographers, Mediterranean is Mediterranean. Patrioli's work is clearly influenced by the work of the Baron von Gloeden, who photographed young Sicilians in ancient Greek poses. Thus, through Patrioli's photographs I see myself as object, not subject. Or better yet, I see the boy I was through the eyes of another.

Patrioli is a northern Italian man photographing southern Italian boys. His selection of models and scenery is telling. In fact, the book is ripe with northern Italian ideas about southern Italians, about northern European stereotypes of southern Europeans. In Patrioli's photographs, cultural connections between nature, darkness, the body and sexuality are fully exploited. His boys are photographed in nature: on the beach, in the forest. Rarely do we see them in civilization: they are virtually noble savages. They are not depicted in their own, possibly urban, probably working class con-

texts; rather, they are shown in some romantic state of nature.

In Patrioli's compositions, the weather is always hot. In fact, it's always tourist season, the time when Northerners often flood the South; it's always summer, perhaps the only way Northerners can envision the South.

The boys themselves are clearly posed, yet just as clearly they are supposed to be un-



Tony Patrioli

A subject in 'Sunbeams'

posed, that is, natural. The very artificiality of these "natural" poses brings the photographer back into the picture, no matter how much he would deny it. The teenagers look stiff; the tilt of their heads, the positioning of their limbs seem done to someone else's requirements. Almost all stare at the camera with the standard gay male porn cruise: they are sexually available.

They are photographed in ways that emphasize the myth of youth: they are playful, not thoughtful; they are unaffected by worldly concerns like working, eating, day-to-day living. Finally, they are younger looking than most Italian teenaged boys: they are universally hairless and thin. In short, they are portrayed as innocent, not sophisticated; bodies, not intellects; inferiors, not equals.

Granted, the images in the book are refreshing in that they are of something other than the hairless young blonds we usually see in male erotica. Instead, we have pictures of hairless young brunettes. However, their common darkness is part of their appeal: it is a sign of their uncontrollable sexuality. The little diversity among the admittedly beautiful youths is limited to the details of facial features: thicker eyebrows

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The powers of humor in the face of AIDS

David Feinberg's novel contrasts pre- and post-AIDS gay male life

Eighty-Sixed
David B. Feinberg
Viking, NY, 1989
\$18.95 cloth, 236pp.

Reviewed by Carrie Dearborn

Eighty-Sixed — the name of this book — is short for gone, used up. It wasn't a title that exactly inspired me to start reading David Feinberg's novel about facing the AIDS epidemic. But I opened it at random and saw the chapter heading, "How to Get Eighty-Sixed from the Restaurant or Cocktail Lounge of Your Choice":

Eschew reservations. Force your way past the maitre d' or the bouncer, insisting that you are "on the list." Dress inappropriately. Go to Lutece in inexperienced drag; neglect to shave. Leave your fly unzipped. Forget to wear underwear. Ask for complicated cocktails and dispute their execution.

— and I figured this book was for me. As a disabled lesbian, I know a lot of disabled people develop the same defense that Feinberg has facing the AIDS epidemic — a certain kind of humor. (In another section, on symptoms, Feinberg cites "a fondness for intravenous feedings.") Really, what else can you do?

I also read this book because I wanted to understand better, in the face of AIDS, how there can be a gay culture. I'm not as able to

be in it as I once was and I'm curious.

Anyway, the first half of the book takes place in 1980, an age that, looking back, must seem like an absolute heaven for gay men. (It wasn't too bad for dykes either.) It was okay to be out, there was lots of sex that was just fun; in fact, there was a whole culture that simply doesn't exist anymore. Feinberg's depiction seems to be accurate, at least to this lesbian who hung out with a crowd of drag queens, assorted dykes and garden variety faggots in that pre-AIDS era.

The second half of the book takes place in '86. B.J. (blow-job?) Rosenthal, former prolific trickee, is figuring the odds of not having HIV antibodies. Slim, he thinks. He may be right there, although since he stopped his frantic search for a boyfriend, via sex, in 1981, we can't be sure.

And then B.J. launches into Centers for Disease Control statistics of PWA deaths thus far. All I could think of was the fact that if I'd paid any attention to my prognosis, I'd never have come out of the coma I was in at one point — or if I did, I'd be speechless, totally paralyzed, a vegetable or other dire things. And, I've found out recently, I'm not as much a miracle as I once was. When I had my AVM (a type of stroke) eight years ago, 99 percent of us died. With new technology, only 50 percent do now, and

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Miss Utah with a dick

Sacred Cows
Jed A. Bryan
Banned Books, Austin, TX, 1989
\$8.95 paper, 161pp.

Reviewed by John Kyper

Two years ago Banned Books published Jed A. Bryan's novel *A Cry in the Desert*, an updated version of the Nazi Holocaust set in Nevada in the age of AIDS. This was one of the most horrific books I have ever encountered, a credible and well-written reminder of what could well happen here if we succumb to complacency.

Now Bryan has come back with another novel, one that is as different from its predecessor as is imaginable. The title *Sacred Cows* gives but a hint of the treat awaiting the reader in this uproarious send-up of some of society's most revered institutions.

The plot revolves around the efforts of a variegated collection of individuals and groups to demonstrate, infiltrate or otherwise take over the Miss American (sic) pageant in Atlantic City. The cast is cluttered with dozens and dozens of characters, who interact with the frenzied pace of a raucous, old fashioned farce — reminding me of nothing so much as a Keystone Cops comedy.

The motley crew of this tale includes: Cleveland Moral Reform League, who are attempting to disrupt this "Godless" event; the gay guerilla theatre Brotherhood of Radical Androphiles; Atlantic City School for Pickpockets, who become ushers to fleece the audience; and Congressional Union for the Naturalization of Transsexuals. Also making an appearance are a band of Navajos protesting the lack of Indian contestants; a motorcycle gang leader chasing after his sister, Miss California; a loser from Florida who vows revenge upon the finalists; and a reservation clerk who overbooks his hotel for the event and then skips town with the money.

But at the center of the action are Michelle and Michael Barrington, as close to being identical twins as a sister and a brother could possibly be. Michelle is a Miss Utah contestant, Mormon and virginal; Michael is gay, agnostic and a sometime female impersonator. One day he agrees to fill in for her at work, only to be picked up by her boyfriend Grant at the end of her shift. After a tense date, they return to Grant's

place, where he makes a pass. Expecting Michelle's customary rebuff, he is astounded when Michael yields — and lets him bugger him.

When Michelle learns what has happened, she is so scandalized that she goes back to her mother, who teaches in England. In her absence Michael substitutes himself into the Miss Utah contest, and wins. Michelle gets to Atlantic City just in time for the pageant. Being pursued by an FBI agent who suspects something is up, the two switch roles back and forth with dizzying rapidity, right up to the book's tumultuous climax.

For sheer pandemonium, *Sacred Cows* puts the wildest three-ring circus to shame. It's a wonderful, hilarious light read just in time for summer.

John Kyper is an itinerant municipal bureaucrat who has written for GCN for years. □

Italian Boys

Continued from page 7

here, a slightly larger nose there.

Gene Rizzo's introduction to the book illuminates the problems with the photographs. Patrioli photographs these "youths" because he "is drawn to the 'other'"; the photographer's status as subject is unquestioned. He is a man "endowed with the eye of a hunter." Are the boys animals? "Spontaneity and ambiguity appear to thrive" in this "hothouse atmosphere"; just look at the boys, Rizzo writes: their "added suggestiveness...isn't by chance." Of course: they are by nature hypersexual and are incapable of considered, unspontaneous action.

"Ah, the eternal lure of the South!" Rizzo writes. "To northerners, the more one journeys to the sun, the more physical inhibitions appear to dissolve." Here Rizzo gets closer to the truth: Patrioli's images are less about the photographed than the photographer, more about the North than the South, more about adult men than boys. They are images of the darker South as outside of the context of culture, as unthinkingly sexual, as at the disposal of the North. In short, the book is not good photography, not good porn, and not good politics.

Marcos Bisticas-Cocoves is a GCN staff member. □

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Homosexuals who seek to emulate heterosexuals lack ambition

Betty Berzon's book on lesbian/gay relationships pushes the 'squirm factor' off the charts

Permanent Partners

Betty Berzon, Ph.D
E.P. Dutton, N.Y., 1988
\$19.95 cloth, 432pp.

Reviewed by Laurie Livingston

Permanent Partners by Betty Berzon is a book that I really wanted to like. After all, when was the last time you perused the psychology section of the local bookstore and found a self-help book that focused on gay men and lesbians? Or, that even mentioned us, except as a pathological



Betty Berzon

Rossi Photography

phenomenon or a developmental concern? (Just two months ago, I received an advertisement for an "exciting, new" book about "female homosexuality" by a straight female psychiatrist who claimed to have "helped" 12 lesbian clients to deal with their developmental arrest.) Sad to say, the very existence of a book such as *Permanent Partners*, which moves beyond "the question of us" to explore the patterns of our living and loving represents a major development in the mainstream counseling and psychology literature.

But almost immediately as I read *Permanent Partners*, I began to experience a phenomenon I refer to as "the squirm factor," that is, a degree of personal discomfort. The "squirm factor" seemed attributable to specific sources: Berzon's lack of political/social/historical/racial awareness; her at times mildly rebuking and parental tone; the absence of strong confrontation or anger with the prevailing sociopolitical climate; and the cultural and socioeconomic homogeneity of her text and case examples.

The "squirm factor" was already in evidence by page two, when Berzon bashes the "'70s discos and clubs of the '80s.'" She states: "The music was like a heavy current carrying us away from our troubles, into a sea of denial that there was anything left to believe in but this deafening beat." Well, that was true enough for some, but what of the struggle to make public space for ourselves? What about the huge significance of "women-only" space in our culture? And the open celebration of our eroticism?

Well, the "squirm factor" went "off the charts" at the next passage as Berzon, in one fell swoop, reduces our "politics" to a by-gone faddish stage, and a distraction from our relationships: "Then there was politics. Now that was some exciting stuff. We strategized, and we confronted.... We raised money in astonishing amounts. We built whole new institutions. We created a community where there had never been one.... We turned the tide of history for gay and lesbian people. We were goddamn heroes!.... how could any relationship compete with all that heady stuff?" Berzon admonishes: "And now it's time for reality. Oh, the clubs are still there, and there's plenty of political work still to be

done, but let's face it folks, it's time to get some balance in our collective lives...."

Certainly, Berzon should not be faulted for tracing only general trends; she is not, after all, an historian. But her tone fails to respect our struggles and triumphs through these years. Berzon also discounts our political relationships and ignores our complex relationship to our politics. She thus promotes a dangerous dichotomy for lesbians and gay men in the '80s: your politics or your relationship. Contrary to Berzon's view, I might say that intense political involvement in our communities is essential to our safety, pride, and to the expansion of our freedom...basically to what we need to establish and protect our relationships.

Despite these criticisms, the early chapters of the book are not totally without value. Perhaps confusingly, it quickly becomes clear that Berzon cares a great deal for the gay and lesbian community. She cares enough to share her life with us, openly, to speak to us with a very human style, and to show us some ways to realize changes. Of particular merit are some of Berzon's case examples. While at times overly stereotypic of lesbians and gay men, Berzon is at her best when she models an introspective approach, designed to move us beyond old routines and superficial issues. In the "Building Compatibility" chapter, for example, we meet a gay couple whose conflict is explained as each partner's caretaking expectations "put onto" the other. Here, Berzon's example is fairly universal and gender-neutral. It was not long, however, before I began to squirm again, as Berzon moved to another example. She describes how one lesbian partner becomes overly focused on her partner's appearance (out of her own unresolved adolescent issues). Here, as in other instances, Berzon focuses on intra-and interpersonal dynamics to the detriment of the sociocultural context of our behavior. In this case, she fails to address the objectification and oppression of women.

In other disturbing instances, it feels like Berzon is saying that we are good as heterosexuals so we deserve what they have. Consider this quote: "Gay and lesbian people are not so psychologically different from our heterosexual counterparts.... We, too, need the stability and tranquility that enables us to compose a life of meaningful activity from a home base that is secure. We have the need. We have the right. We have the personal resources."

Berzon says that her book is "about learning to imbue (our relationships) with all the solemnity of marriage without necessarily imitating the heterosexual model." That sounds pretty good, but consider the next sentence: "It is about believing even more strongly in the sanctity of the bond with our partners and *being willing to do whatever is necessary to preserve that bond*," (emphasis mine). The latter phrase sounds a little too "do or die," "till death do us part" for me; sometimes the decision to leave a relationship is healthy, particularly for women who have often been taught that they cannot survive on their own.

Berzon sounds almost defensive when she says, "Heterosexuals enter their intimate partnerships with the expectation that they will be permanent. There is much in the couple's life to reinforce that expectation." Again, I was uncomfortable with the subtler message: look what they get, we should be able to have that too. Discussing aging, Berzon says "we collaborate to hide older gays and lesbians from view" while "in the nongay word...we see grandma and grandpa enjoying their golden years together." Funny, I hadn't noticed *any* segment of our culture being duly appreciative of older citizens. And again, Berzon is saying: see how good *they* have it. To co-opt a feminist slogan: homosexuals who seek to emulate heterosexuals lack ambition.

Happily, *Permanent Partners* contains an

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A finger on the country's gay pulse

OUT/LOOK magazine manages to be serious and playful, scholarly and artistic

OUT/LOOK, national lesbian and gay quarterly

Publishers: Jeffrey Escoffier and Kim Klausner

\$21 per year, write P.O. Box 46034, S.F., CA 94146.

Reviewed by Karin Aguilar-San Juan

Call me spoiled, but despite the variety of queer publications I have at my disposal — that keep me not only well informed but alive and kicking — I've wanted something more. I've wished there were a magazine that was both worldly and down to earth, analytical but accessible, visionary but pragmatic. A magazine like that, I've imagined, would put our gay community's strength into motion, stir us up, and help us to overcome the substantial losses we have been facing — political as well as personal.

OUT/LOOK, the national lesbian and gay quarterly now well into its second year of publication, fills that niche remarkably well. It's as if the editors had a finger on the country's gay pulse and they knew from the feel of it just what to offer. Over the past year, *OUT/LOOK* has provided a needed forum for a wide range of the gay/lesbian experience: unlike the more specialized magazines that appeal to either gay men or lesbians but not to both, *OUT/LOOK* is not gender sectarian. In many important ways, *OUT/LOOK* bridges the gap between gay men and lesbians simply by putting our similarities and our differences more clearly into view.

I appreciate *OUT/LOOK*'s nonsectarian approach because I've always thought that when women and men link together to claim our same-sex love — and therefore powerfully reject a socially constructed norm — we force the issue of sexuality into the open in a way that we wouldn't be able to do separately. In *AMALGM*, Boston's group for Asian lesbians and gay men, women and men celebrate our heritage across gender categories and ethnic differences. We work hard to redefine what sexuality means for Asian people, and I believe we learn a lot from working together — although we are often challenged by stereotypes, including our own internalized ones.

It's not that reading *OUT/LOOK* will help you to forget such essential gender differences. Far from it. But, if you're like me, you'll look at those differences in a new way. For example, I found Steven Heimoff's article, "The Kindness of Strangers," fascinating. Explaining his motivations for frequenting the peep shows where he cruises straight men, Heimoff's essay is, to say the least, controversial. He basically says he gets his thrills doing

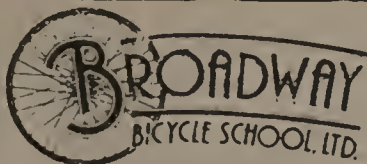
something lots of people wouldn't approve of. He doesn't sound like the most feminist-oriented gay man I've ever met — he declares "I may be queer, but...I take my manhood seriously" — but then again he makes no claim to feminism. For the most part, Heimoff is honest — and the only way we're going to know ourselves as a gay community is to look at ourselves as he does, squarely in the eyes, without judgment.

I felt the same way about the piece by Nayland Blake on Tom of Finland's provocative contribution to gay men's erotica/porn, although, not surprisingly, other lesbians took offense, and at least one woman promptly cancelled her subscription. "If gay men want 'Tom of Finland' in their magazines, then put it in men's magazines. Calling *OUT/LOOK* a lesbian and gay quarterly and feeding the stereotype of gay men's penises as their only vital organ is offensive. How do articles on lesbian softball and lesbian aging offer any balance to that?"

I rolled my eyes when I read her letter, but the woman's got a point. It's true that drawings of horny hunks valiantly displaying — in the words of another, less sex-negative lesbian — "terminal cases of phallus tyrannus" are a far cry from those sporty dykes who croon and swoon over each other in the ballpark (featured in "The Double Play, or Love in the Softball Field"). As far as I know, today's images of lesbian sexuality veer away from nitty-gritty sex; if all you knew about lesbians came from lesbian erotica, you might think that all we do is drink tea and give each other backrubs. But there's not much *OUT/LOOK* can, or should, do about that. Furthermore, though I find most lesbian porn to be either too male-defined or just plain boring, at least pornographic representations of our sexuality make sex between women visible, unlike labia-shaped pendants or, Goddess forgive me, lavender crystals. I'd even go so far as to say I wish we had a "Tomboy of Finland" for ourselves.

If the writers who contribute to *OUT/LOOK* have their way, lesbian and gay male self-awareness, about sexuality and many other issues, will continue to grow. For example, Cindy Patton's popularized discussion of the movies we watch, "The Cum Shot: 3 Takes on Lesbian and Gay Sexuality," helps sort out what we get from films that depict gay or lesbian life, what we might define as erotic or "life-affirming," and what is basically raunchy, sexy, non-socially redeeming, but fun. In another vein altogether, Anthony Thomas reminds us in a feature article in the latest issue, "The House the Kids Built," that mainstream pop culture owes much to its gay/Black roots, and a side bar gives you

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Eighty-Sixed

Continued from page 8

they're doing strange things like coming out of comas, regaining voices or use of limbs. The problem with medical statistics is that, like computers, they become obsolete quickly. No one, including the CDC, can forecast how AIDS is going to affect immune systems that held HIV at bay for six or seven years.

Toward the beginning of the 1986 half of the book, one of B.J.'s tricks (Bob) develops AIDS. B.J. becomes a regular visitor, although his interest in Bob is quite lukewarm. And at the end of every visit, B.J. washes his hands — as do all of Bob's friends. I found both B.J.'s emotional detachment and his compulsive hand-washing extremely offensive. Emotional detachment is one way temporarily able-bodied people deal with catastrophic illness, and it forms a wall between the people involved. To say this is aggravating understates how a disabled person can feel. I'd venture to say that no PWA would even want such a visitor, much less encourage that person to come back again. Most disabled people are not that desperate for company.

As for the other friends' handwashing — well, I find that rather homophobic. PWAs face enough ridiculousness. There's no need to let absurd hetero fear take over.

Although this book is billed as being about AIDS, it's also about gay life — and that includes work, friendship, and of course, sex. While reading it, I felt like a sort of voyeur into gay male sexuality, which was presented with such humor that I didn't get bored, turned off, or feel as if it was all being explained to me. To my great surprise, I found the sex actually interesting and at times even titillating (even while read in the Boston Public Library). Another aspect of the book I particularly liked is its depiction of the deep friendships with other gay men B.J. has.

What I couldn't be very sympathetic to was B.J.'s work problems. To his puzzlement, he becomes a manager. The bane of his existence is a woman named Caroline, who was hired at the same level as he was. He tells us that through no virtue of his own he is promoted. She, in turn, engages in passive resistance that is straight out of the SCUM manifesto. Any feminist who was around in the early '70s would recognize it and secretly cheer this woman on. B.J. of course, hates her.

I finished *Eighty-Sixed* with great admiration for Feinberg and his willingness to tackle AIDS — especially in '86, when there wasn't much good news. The last image the book offers is of a never-ending torrent of AIDS deaths. At least now, we have (misguided?) optimists and militant PWA groups. The author does say that if he wrote the novel now, he'd be more hopeful. One wonders what an '89'd would say.

Carrie Dearborn is a worker for the rights of the disabled. □

Comix

Continued from back page

ters the ghost of a previous occupant: a sweet young Southern hairdresser named Casey who died of AIDS in the earliest days of the epidemic. When Phillip criticizes Casey's promiscuity, the ghost responds, "Ah saw ev'ry man ah ever met as a potential lover. Yew see ev'ry man as a potential executioner. Tell me — do you ask for a cigarette before sex?" Chilling, heady, fabulous stuff.

This is not to give the impression that *Run that Sucker at Six!!!* is light on the lesbian quotient — au contraire. We thrill with performance-artist-slash-"feminist waitron" Kyle as she lets the running monologue in her head cut to ribbons the rude patrons of the bistro where she slings espresso.

And Morgan? She brings just the right amount of droll late-'80s cynicism to her observations of the wacked out events exploding all around her. Morgan and N. Leigh Dunlap are set to become subversive chroniclers of these messed up times, when the passion of our lives intersects with the inconsistencies of the real world at the *oddest* moments.

Christopher Wittke is GCN's staff features writer. □

Peptide-T

Continued from page 3

ton which will involve 45 people to be studied over a period of six months. At present, 17 people are already enrolled in the trial and another 19 are undergoing screening.

Several members of the Boston chapter of ACT UP asked whether Peptide-T would be available to those who did not meet the requirements of the protocol, one of which is that the participant's T-4 cell count has to be higher than 100. FCHC staff members reported that, unfortunately, the money does not exist to begin a parallel trial of the drug for people who do not fit the protocol. Pert suggested that the best thing that could be done at this point would be to fill up the trial, and get it over with as soon as possible, so that Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approval can be sought. Steven Busby of the CRI Board of Directors echoed this sentiment, saying that helping out with this Peptide-T study is "the most important thing the community can do at this point. We need the most rapid completion possible, to get the proof that we have to have," to go before the FDA.

Given a grant from the American Foundation for AIDS Research, CRINE was founded earlier this year and plans to work with groups from all over New England in order to bring trials of the newest drugs into the community for testing. CRINE believes that individual doctors, people with AIDS (PWAs) and other health care providers can sponsor trials that are as accurate and effective as those sponsored by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases. CRI-based trials have lower overhead and expand clinical trials of promising drugs and "provide an opportunity for individual PWAs to control their own destiny," according to Fred Mandel.

Mandel said that the "most exciting" research is currently being done in CRIs. He pointed out that aerosolized pentamidine, a preventative treatment for pneumocystis carinii pneumonia (PCP), was developed by CRIs in New York and San Francisco and approved by the Food and Drug Administration in record time. "This is the wave of the future," said Mandel. □

Milestone

Continued from page 1

lighted in a confrontation between an ACT-UP researcher and an ACT UP member. Following testimony by Susan Krown of Memorial Sloan-Kettering in New York, Iris Long zeroed in on the poor response of the NIH-funded system. She elicited cheers from fellow ACT UP members and others when she said, "You've got \$1.3 million of federal research money and only 44 patients in clinical trials!"

Despite the heated discussions, participants seemed exhilarated by the intensity of the conference but unsure of its outcome. Said one prominent activist, "I'm not going to say yet that this was a monumental or historic conference. It depends on what happens." □



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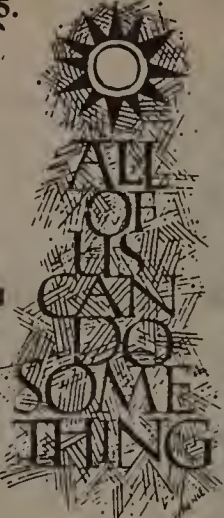
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TV, 25, who likes other TV/TSs, looking for penpal. I enjoy kinky sex, get along with all races. Need penpal despterly! Dave BEIDLER, 67043, Rincon HU4, 10,000 S. Wilmont, Tucson AZ 85777.

I am a fresh virgin who recently stepped out of the closet, vary open minded to any thing. I still have a lot of learning the I would enjoy to be taught in the future. But my main desire is just for penpal friendship for the present time. Ed-dië RISDAL, Box 316, Ft Madison IA 52627.

48 yr old bisexual male would like to correspond with those of you who have uncommon desires and into sex out of the ordinary. I'm into pornography, NAMBLA and would love to share experiences, Lee CLOUD, C-59987, Box 705, LB-124, Soledad CA 93960.

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I'm serving time for forgery and am interested in writing someone, any age, for friendship. My interests include reading, music, theatre, sports, and traveling. I want to finish cosmetology school and get my beautician license. I'd also like to get your paper. Ricky HAMM, 89119, Star Rt Box 22-B, Tucker AR 72168.

38 yr old black bisexual male would like to hear from someone out there in the free world. Robert Lee ANDERSON, EF-166918, 4600 Fulton Mill Rd, Macon GA 31213.

I'm just a gay fellow seeking companionship of Black men who have been blessed with more than the average. Safe sex is a must. Fabulous Phil MUSGRAVE, 32759-080, Box 1000, Seagoville TX 75159.

22 yr old gay male would like to correspond with other gay males for friendship. Robby MORGAN, 152366, 1012 W. Columbia, Farmington MO 63640.

28 yr old gay male, butterscotch complexion, seeks a friendship with other gay males. Race and age unimportant. Gary MOORE, 41439, 1012 W. Columbia, Farmington MO 63640.

Due for parole soon, seeking friendship to continue after release. Please write. Daniel KLUEG, 161721, Box 900, Jefferson City MO 65102.

Yuppie in need of tender loving and hot sex. A long lasting romance is my dream. If you have dreams of candle lit dinners and holding hands on the beach, let's connect. Bruce KNIGHT, B-7, 12598-057, Box 1000, Seagoville TX 75159.

Intelligent 28 yr old gay male, Libra, into weightlifting and healthy bodies, seeks correspondence from other gay males also into body building. Race not important. Thomas REASONS, Box B-37680, Florence AZ 85232.

Black bodybuilder, 25, seeks to correspond with TVs of any race who value the meaning of a true relationship. My hobbies are going to the beach, jazz music, and watching ballet dancing. J.R. TAYLOR, 11912-198, Box 1700 AD unit, Black Canyon-1, Phoenix AZ 85027.

I would like to correspond with Bisexual men and women interested in Health, Bicycling, Vegetarian foods, nudity and the finer things in life. Age and race doesn't matter. Prisoners ok too. Andy COUCH, 365097, Rt 1 Box 16, Lovelady TX 75851.

I'm a GAY prisoner looking for some correspondence with anyone, free world or prisoner. I'm 36, not looking for financial help, just looking for a 'FRIEND' I can relate with, tell my secrets too and forget the misery of being here for a time. James MANUEL, 96839, Camp H Unit One C-dorm, LA State Penitentiary, Angola LA 70712.

HONEY!

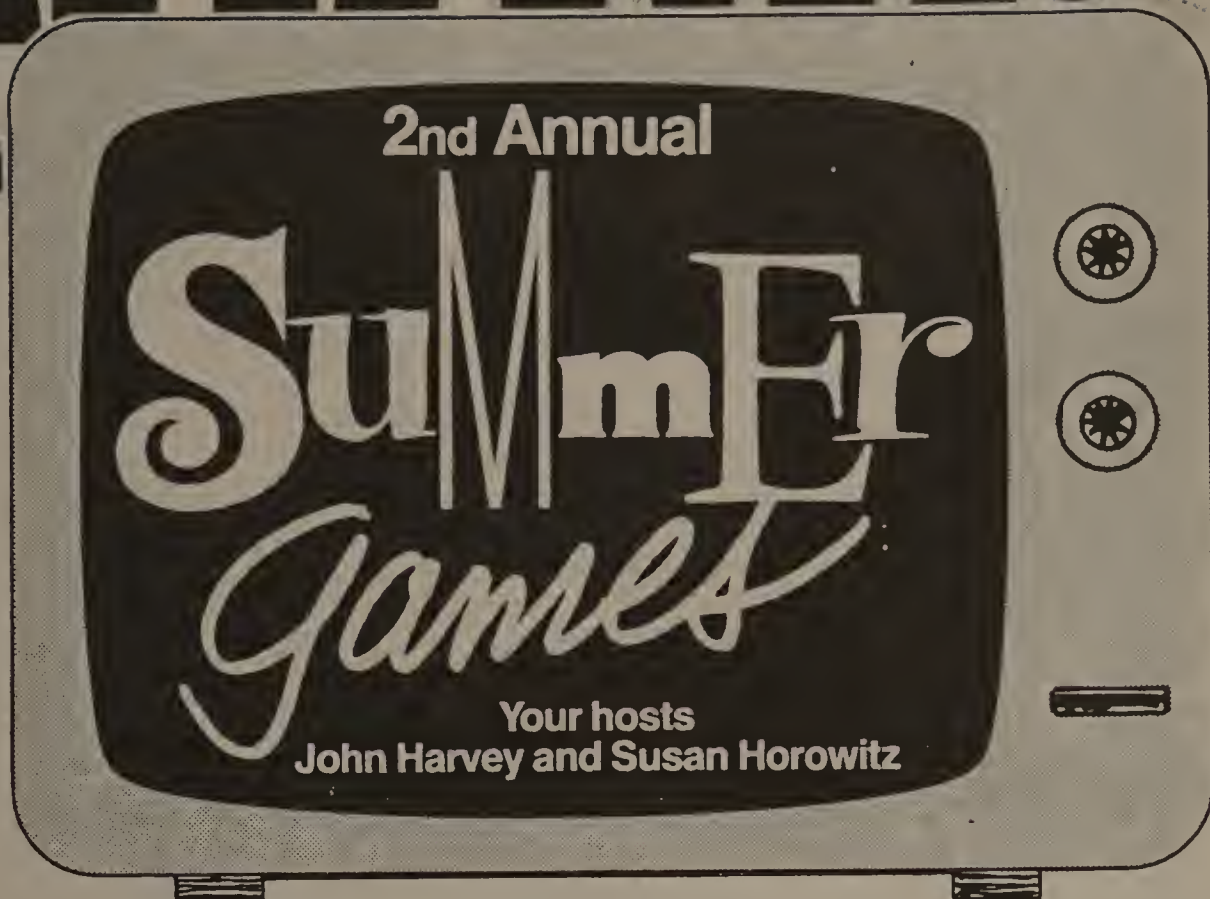
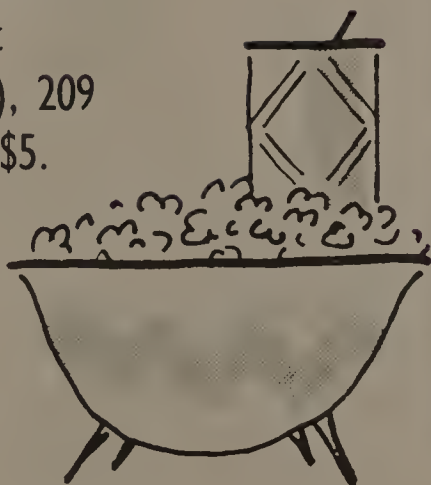
I hear you help gay prisoners who are in the 'hole' like me to get a paper worth reading and some pen friends. I'd be very grateful honey if you would grant me this request. I'd like to hear from any gay single sweet hearts out there who's wanting a gay cutie to write for friendship. John GIBBS, D-49364, 4A-8C-101-U, PO Box 1902-A, Tehachapi CA 93561.

In need of loving GM, TV, TS to write this total homosexual. Love to suck cock with fat red head. Fr, Gr, WS, TT, FF, etc. Can't write prisoners, please. Ronald (Baby Face) POST, 183812, Box 45699, Lucasville OH 45699.



Calendar

27 Thursday ☐ **Win, Lose or Draw** to benefit GCN at Moonshine (Club Cabaret), 209 Columbus Avenue. 8pm. \$5. Info: 426-4469. Wheelchair accessible.



Calendar listings must be received by the Monday before the week of the event. Photos encouraged. Please specify if event is/is not wheelchair accessible and/or sign language interpreted. Please use our format as a guide for listings and put each event on a separate sheet, if possible. Listings must be typed.

22 Saturday

Boston ☐ **Bisexual Network Co-ed Picnic** at the Hatch Shell. Noon. Bring your own picnic. 247-6683(BIS-MOVE).

Cambridge ☐ **Summer in the City Women's Dance.** Drug, alcohol and smoke free. D.J. Whitman, D.J. Old Cambridge Baptist Church, 1151 Mass. Ave. 9pm. \$5 more or less.

Brookline ☐ Andy Warhol's film **Portrait of Ted O'Neill** will be shown at Brookline Art Center to benefit Coolidge Corner Theatre Foundation. 86 Monmouth Street. 8pm. 566-5715.

23 Sunday

Boston ☐ **People's Folk Festival.** Showcasing the best local musicians. Govt. Center. Sharon Sue Kleinan 265-3929.

Jamaica Plain ☐ **Lesbian and Gay Neighbors of JP** meet for kite flying. Lars Anderson Park. 1pm. Margaret, 524-8070.

Boston ☐ **Fundraiser for Keith St. John** openly Black gay candidate for Albany, N.Y. city council. 173 Warren Avenue, (home of Jim Voltz). 3 to 6pm. \$20 suggested donation. Jim, 267-8311.

24 Monday

Boston ☐ **Virginia LaLonde Legal Fund** strategy meeting. Episcopal Diocese Church. 138 Tremont St. Park Street T. 7pm.

Boston ☐ **Boston Bisexual Women's Network.** Volunteer Night. 7:30pm. 247-6683(BIS-MOVE).

Boston ☐ **WORKFORCE** performs at the Channel, 25 Necco Street. 11pm. Wheelchair accessible. 236-4538.

Boston ☐ **Candidates' Night** and Endorsement Meeting sponsored by Greater Boston Lesbian and Gay Political Alliance and Gay Political Alliance Victory Fund. Lesbian and Gay Community Center, 338 Newbury Street. 7pm. Will, 282-0348.

26 Wednesday

Boston ☐ **Coalition of Black Lesbians and Gays** meets at GCN, 62 Berkeley, near Back Bay and Arlington T-stops. 6:30pm. Bi-weekly. Info: Carla, 524-3370.

27 Thursday

Boston ☐ **GCN Production Night.** All welcome. Proofreading starts at 5pm. Paste-up after 7pm. 62 Berkeley St., near Arlington and Back Bay T-stops. Info, GCN: 617/426-4469.

Boston ☐ **Win, Lose or Draw** to benefit GCN. Moonshine at Club Cabaret, 209 Columbus Avenue. 8pm. \$5. 426-4469.

Provincetown ☐ **Cris Williamson** performs through August 10. Post Office Cabaret. 7:30pm. with additional 5pm. shows Sat. \$12. (508) 487-6400.

28 Friday

Boston ☐ **GCN Mailing.** Come help stuff the paper and meet new friends. 5-10pm. 62 Berkeley St., near Arlington and Back Bay T-stops. Info: GCN, 617/426-4469.

Falmouth ☐ **Cape Cod AIDS Council** and WMVY Radio present Tom Rush, Jonathan Edwards, Kate Taylor, Cheryl Wheeler and the Whale Suits in a benefit concert. Gus Cauty Recreation Center, Main Street. 7:30pm. \$17 door, \$15 advance. (508) 771-8881.

29 Saturday

Provincetown ☐ **Gay and Lesbian Advocates and Defenders Annual Summer Party.** 11 Commercial Street. 5-8pm. \$25, 50, 100 and up. 426-1350.

Boston ☐ **BAGLY 9th Anniversary Party** at the YWCA, 140 Clarendon Street. 8pm.- 1am. \$5. 523-7363.

Cambridge ☐ **Mobilization for Survival** benefit dance featuring Cabal, Pitbull, and Hed Wig (Boston Bands). First Congregational Church, 11 Garden Street. 8pm. \$4. 354-0008.

30 Sunday

Boston ☐ **Rock Against Sexism** to benefit BICEP (Bisexual Community Engaging in Politics) at The Twelve, 1270 Boylston Street. 6-10pm. \$2.

Boston ☐ **Girth and Mirth of N.E.** Club Night at 119 Merrimack, 119 Merrimack Street. 5-9pm.

31 Monday

Somerville ☐ **Coalition for Lesbian and Gay Rights** fundraiser featuring Rep. Joe Mackey. At Richard Braun's home. 7pm. 776-6956.

August 1 Tuesday

Boston ☐ **Gay Fathers of Greater Boston** meet to discuss "Gay Rights Report." Lindemann Center, 25 Staniford Street (2nd Floor — Revere Room) 8-10pm. 742-7897.

3 Thursday

Boston ☐ **GCN Production Night.** All welcome. Proofreading starts at 5pm. Paste-up after 7pm. 62 Berkeley St., near Arlington and Back Bay T-stops. Info, GCN: 617/426-4469.

4 Friday

Boston ☐ **GCN Mailing.** Come help stuff the paper and meet new friends. 5-10pm. 62 Berkeley St., near Arlington and Back Bay T-stops. Info: GCN, 617/426-4469.

Allston ☐ **Song of Absence** at Double Edge Theatre, 5 St. Luke's Road. 9pm. \$12, \$15. (also 8/5, 11, 12) 254-4228.

6 Sunday

Somerville ☐ **GLOSS,** Gays and Lesbians on Somerville and Surroundings potluck with mayoral candidates Capuano and Buonomo. 6pm. Mike, 628-2643 or Cissy, 628-2825.

Dorchester ☐ **Dorchester GALA** monthly potluck at the home of James A. 7pm. 825-3737.

Weekly events

Saturday

Boston ☐ **The Boston Area Rape Crisis Center** new training session for hotline. 617/492-RAPE.

Cambridge ☐ **SANCHIN Women's School of Karate and Self Defense** for women of all ages, abilities. YWCA, 7 Temple St. 3-5pm. T.-Th. 6-8pm. 547-3889.

Boston ☐ **Women's Self-Defense Collective** presents **Women's Self-Defense Classes** for all ages, abilities. Wed. eves., Sat. afternoons. 574-9433.

Boston ☐ **Gay Boston,** with Jim Voltz. Boston Neighborhood Network, channels A3 and A8. 7:30-8pm.

Boston ☐ **Body Electric:** Healing with group sensual massage for gay and bisexual men. 551 Tremont. 7:30pm. \$12. 522-9164.

Sunday

Boston ☐ **Boston Alliance of Gay and Lesbian Youth (BAGLY).** Open to youth age 22 and under. 35 Bowdoin St. 2-5pm. 354-6658.

Boston ☐ **Metro Healing healing group** for everyone. Metropolitan Health Club aerobics room, 209 Columbus Ave. 7:30-9:30pm. 426-9205.

Boston ☐ **"Boston's Other Voice,"** radio for gay/lesbian community with Peter Stickel. 11pm. WROR 98.5 FM. 7/23 Cindy Patton, 7/30 Rev. Paul Diederich, pastor of St. Paul's Western Orthodox Church.

Boston ☐ **The Gay Dating Show,** WUNR 1600 AM. 2:30am. Lesbians and Gay Men.

Monday

Cambridge ☐ **Healing Circle** group healing. 5 Upland Rd. 7:30-9:30pm. \$5 suggested. 864-1989.

Cambridge ☐ **Lesbian Rap.** 7/24 Heterosexuality and Lesbianism, 7/31 Separatism. Women's Center, 46 Pleasant St. 8-10pm. Free. 354-8807 (TTY/voice).

Cambridge ☐ **Coalition for Lesbian and Gay Rights** holds bi-weekly planning meeting. 142 Memorial Drive, Rm. 306. 7pm. 776-6956.

Tuesday

Boston ☐ **Gay Fathers of Greater Boston** meet 1st & 3rd Tues. of the month. Lindemann Ctr., 2nd fl. 8-10pm. 742-7897.

Boston ☐ **Gay and Lesbian Support Group for Adult Children of Alcoholics.** Faulkner Hospital. 8:30-10pm. Intake interview required. 522-5800 x1908.

Boston ☐ **Lesbian and Gay Concert & Marching Band.** No audition necessary. YWCA, 120 Clarendon St. 7:15pm. Joe 625-3304, Zoe 396-2989.

Cambridge ☐ **The Group** at Walker Memorial MIT on Memorial Drive. 8pm. 266-1129.

Providence, RI ☐ **ACT-UP/Rhode Island** open meetings. Rocket, 73 Richmond St. 7pm. Bill, 782-9063.

Roxbury ☐ **ACT UP/Boston** meets to confront the AIDS crisis. Rm. 34S, Bldg. 3, Roxbury Community College. 7pm. 49-ACT UP.

Cambridge ☐ **Bisexual Women's Rap.** 7/25 Feminism, 8/1 Choosing (or not choosing) children. Women's Center, 46 Pleasant St. 7:30-10pm. 354-8807.

Cambridge ☐ **30-plus Lesbian Rap** 7-8:30pm. 7/25 Issues in the Workplace, 8/1 Transitions and Passage. The Women's Center (see above).

Cambridge ☐ **Women For Sobriety,** a self help group for women recovering from addictions. Women's Center, 46 Pleasant St. 8-9:30pm. 354-8807

Wednesday

Boston ☐ **Boston Alliance of Gay and Lesbian Youth.** Open to youth age 22 and under. 35 Bowdoin St. New persons' meeting 6pm; women and men meet separately 6:45-7:30; general meeting at 7:30pm. 354-6658.

Boston ☐ **Bisexual Children of Alcoholics.** Mass. General Hosp., lower amphitheater 7:30pm. 259-1559.

Cambridge ☐ **"Say it, Sister!"** WMBR, 88.1 FM. 7-8pm.

Boston ☐ **Women's Self-Defense Classes** for women of all ages, abilities. See Sat. listing.

Cambridge ☐ **Lesbian Al-Anon** with childcare. Women's Center (see above). 6:30-8pm.

Cambridge ☐ **MASS ACT OUT** meeting. M.I.T., Building 66, Rm. 126. 7:30pm. 661-7737.

Thursday

Northampton ☐ **Valley Gay Alliance** meets 1st, 3rd Th. every month, basement of the Unitarian Church, 22 Main St. 7:30pm. 413/527-5310.

Stoneham ☐ **Incest Survivors' Group** for women. New England Memorial Hospital, 5 Woodland Rd. 5-6:30pm. Sara Epstein, 979-7025.

Cambridge ☐ **Wise Woman Tradition Herbal Medicine and Women's Wisdom Classes.** Sliding scale. Whitewolf, 277-8232.

Boston ☐ **Boston Area Rape Crisis Center** drop-in group for women who have been raped. 492-RAPE.

Cambridge ☐ **Incest Survivors Group.** Women's Center (see above). 7:30-9:30pm.

Cambridge ☐ **Non-offending male sexual abuse survivors** group meets first Thursday of every month. Cambridge Ctr. of Commerce conference room, 859 Mass. Ave. 8:30-10pm. \$5 donation. 498-9881.

Friday

Worcester ☐ **AIDS Project-Worcester support group** for HIV positive, PWAs, PWARCs, supporters. Open to all lesbians, gay men. 51 Jackson St. 7-9pm. Dana 508/755-3773.

Boston ☐ **Healing group** for everyone. Santa Fe Hair Salon, 528 Tremont St. 7:30-9:30pm. 426-9205.

Cambridge ☐ **Incest survivors group on death and grief.** Short-term. Women's Center (see above). 7pm.

Cambridge ☐ **Women's Coffeehouse.** Women's Center, 46 Pleasant St. 8-midnight. 354-8807.

Run that Sucker at Six!!!

N. Leigh Dunlap

St. Martin's Press, N.Y., 1989

\$6.95 paper, 115pp.

Wendel on the Rebound

Howard Cruse

St. Martin's Press, N.Y., 1989

\$9.95 paper

Reviewed by Christopher Wittke

Imagine my disappointment when Howard Cruse's latest collection of *Wendel* comics left me feeling unsatisfied. Wendel is one of the most lovable underground comic characters to ever crop up — he and his pals Sterno, Deb and Tina, his lover Ollie and Ollie's kid Farley have been running in *The Advocate* for a big chunk of the '80s. The gang has certainly seen its share of ups-and-downs; love, lust, homophobia, ambition, AIDS, and of course, the wacky world of corporate gay publishing have all been covered in *Wendel*.

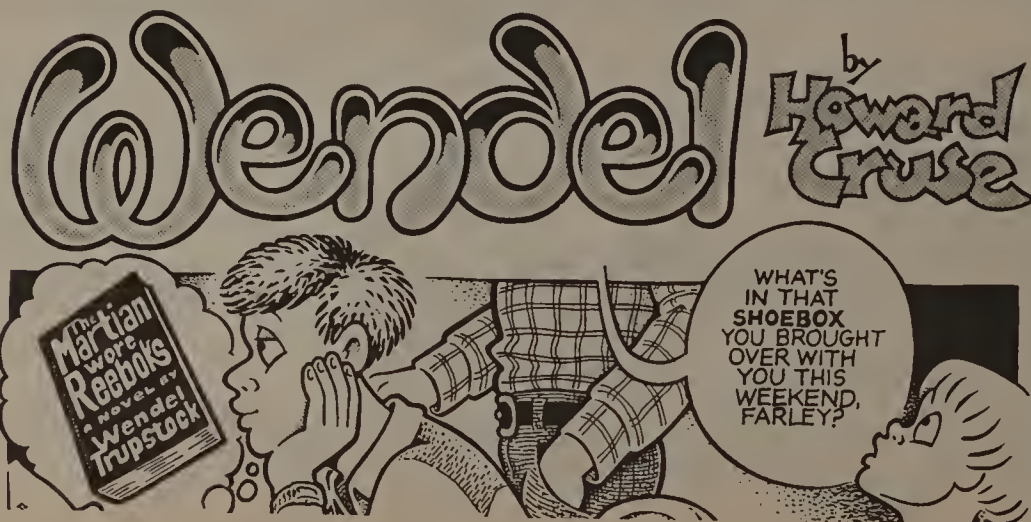
The problem with *Wendel on the Rebound* is that it is dependent on the structure of the comic strip as it appears in *The Advocate*. Two-page episodes with an average of 16 panels each allow Cruse the room to play around with wordy dialogue and clever subplots. While this makes for a nifty bi-weekly read with a serial structure that brings you back for more, lump over 50 of these babies together and you're cruising down the road to *Wendel* overkill.

Don't get me wrong, Cruse is a groundbreaking comic pioneer — one of the first underground cartoonists to come out — and his stylish and detailed artwork betrays a real love for his characters. There are some singularly wonderful episodes included in *Wendel on the Rebound* — among them the series in which Wendel visits an old friend who now has AIDS. That this pre-dated Garry Trudeau's *Doonesbury* series on a PWA and that the strips each covered similar ground is a telling sign of Cruse's influence.

But for every joyous section such as this there are tedious segments like the "Ollie decides to become an actor and has to appear nude" episodes or the flogging-a-dead-

The lovable world of queer comix

New collections of Wendel and Morgan Calabrese



horse *New York Native* parodies in which a psychotic gay newspaper publisher (ho-ho) advances conspiracy theories about AIDS (ho-ho-ho) which involve space pods (Stop! You're killing me). Episodes such as these feel absolutely endless and drag the collection down.

While I still read *Wendel* every time *The Advocate* falls into my hands, *Wendel on the Rebound* is a clear reminder that less is more.

...

Imagine my surprise when the second collection of *Morgan Calabrese* comics by lesbian cartoonist N. Leigh Dunlap, *Run that Sucker at Six!!!*, turned out to be an unmitigated delight. The charms of the *Calabrese* strip, syndicated in gay and lesbian newspapers all over the place, had heretofore eluded me. I always felt as if I picked up a serial in the middle of the action and could never get a handle on what the heck was going on.

Of course, it didn't help that I couldn't tell the gender of the characters (although a dyke fan of the strip recently told me "It's easy — all the gay men have moustaches"). But *Run that Sucker at Six!!!* has changed all that. Like all good comics collections, page one has descriptions of the major characters, in this case lesbians Morgan and Kyle, and gay man Phillip. And once you get to know these people, you want to be friends for life.

With elegantly minimal line drawings and dialogue that has a refreshing economy (a lot gets said with a few words), N. Leigh Dunlap lets the universe unfold. We stick with Morgan, destined to be the fictional lesbian hero of the '90s, as she makes sense of her crazy world. Morgan deals with the holidays, tries to build bridges with her family, and ever attempts to be supportive of her friends.

The triumph of the collection, however, comes when the narrative follows Phillip to the gay resort town of Provincetown. Frozen with AIDS anxiety and the fear of intimacy, he skips out on a blind date by running to P'Town and going to work on a whale watch. In his apartment he encoun-

Continued on page 11

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